



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Columbia, SC

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 200 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Columbia for a Brownfields Pilot. Columbia is South Carolina's capital and largest city. The Pilot has targeted Columbia City Center (population 6,854) for redevelopment. Columbia City Center is 43% minority, has a poverty rate of 48% (as compared to 21% for the entire City), and is a part of Columbia's Enterprise Community. Past and present industrial and manufacturing land uses in City Center have taken an environmental toll on the area. Aging or vacant buildings are present in the area. These buildings include steel fabrication plants, numerous rail yards and spurs, cotton mills, warehouses, gas works, and a landfill.

Consisting of 1,400 contiguous acres, City Center is a mix of residential, commercial, light, and heavy industrial-use properties. The area played a vital role in Columbia's economic well-being in the first half of the 20th century, but fell into decline by the 1960s. City Center has been the subject of many land use/development studies, but private investment in the area is unlikely without major environmental investment and redevelopment. Property values will likely remain low as well without investments. Consequently, redevelopment of brownfields is critical to the economic success of an area already primed for major development projects over the next few years.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Columbia, South Carolina

Date of Announcement:
July 1998

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the 1,400-acre Columbia City Center for cleanup and redevelopment into a social and economic hub of the community.

Contacts:

City of Columbia
(803) 733-8313

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 4
(404) 562-8661

Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:
[http://www.epa.gov/region4/wastepgs/
brownfpgs/bf.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region4/wastepgs/brownfpgs/bf.htm)

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

The Pilot has four primary objectives as it tries to establish a mechanism for beneficial redevelopment of vacant and underused properties located within Columbia City Center. First, the Pilot will identify, prioritize, and assess specific brownfields sites. Second, the Pilot will develop cleanup alternatives and budgets for contaminated sites targeted for redevelopment. Third, the Pilot will create financial incentives for voluntary cleanup activities. Finally, the Pilot will conduct outreach activities for stakeholders and community members.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Completing Phase I and II assessments of an estimated five sites with real or perceived contamination;
- Evaluating innovative cleanup alternatives to help define acceptable residual levels of contamination;
- Assisting with regulatory negotiations for voluntary cleanup programs;
- Creating a Brownfields Advisory Committee to organize community outreach programs and facilitate community awareness; and
- Disseminating information about Brownfields Pilot activities to stakeholders to advance community participation.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.